



**GOVERNOR DIRK KEMPTHORNE  
REMARKS AT THE DEDICATION CEREMONY  
FOR THE IDAHO STATE VETERANS CEMETERY**

**Boise, Idaho  
July 31, 2004**

Today we're gathered to dedicate this cemetery to the men and women who have served our state and our country in the Armed Forces. To each of these veterans, I express my personal deep gratitude and the gratitude of your fellow citizens of Idaho.

In agreeing to wear your uniform, each of you demonstrated your willingness to lay down your life. For your fellow Americans, we who reap the rewards of this sacrifice honor your courage and your example.

Today's ceremony represents our continuing commitment to Idaho's veterans. And while this is the last state-dedicated veterans cemetery, it is without question one of the most impressive – as it should be.

For all of those who have worked to ensure that the cemetery meets the dignity and the greatness of those veterans that it will receive, let me say you have achieved your mission, and you're to be commended for that. Joe Bleymeier laid out very well many of those names. And Richard Jones. Included in that roster needs to be those two names as well.

Those who served in World War II are leaving us in large numbers each day. We built this cemetery for them and for generations of soldiers, airmen and sailors that have, and will, come after them.

It is also a place for us to remember our POW's and MIA's.

106 years ago, the United States entered the Spanish-American War. Since then, Idaho's sons and daughters have served in the Philippines, the First World War, the Second World War, Korea, Vietnam, the Cold War, the Gulf War and the War on Terror. The United States does not seek to produce more generations of war veterans. Yet, needs arise. And the brave men and women of this state always answer the call to service.

From Idaho Falls to Twin Falls, from Bonners Ferry to Glenns Ferry, and now from Fort Bliss, Texas, en route to Iraq, our men and women continue to fight for our values and freedoms around the world.

Let us also remember that the families of these great patriots are sharing in this sacrifice. Many of you here today know of that sacrifice, and each of you is owed our deepest gratitude.

As Governor, I have made the Idaho Veterans Cemetery a priority because our veterans deserve this. And I believe it will serve as a constant reminder of the price of liberty, the duty of our citizens, and the greatness of our state and nation.

I envision relatives visiting the cemetery, parents bringing their children, scout troops and members of community organizations, each inspired by the courage and the strength of those who have been laid to rest in this hallowed ground.

This will encourage citizens to remember that our democratic freedom has been maintained by men and women who knew their duty, and had the courage to fulfill it. This cemetery is the realization of a dream – but it is not the culmination. Those who visit, and walk down these paths, will have their hearts changed. They will not leave as the same person. They will come, and they will have a greater appreciation of the sacrifices made and the freedoms defended by those interred here.

Let this memorial to our veterans remind us to repay duty with duty and honor with honor. Let us resolve to fulfill our responsibilities as citizens. Let us serve honorably in our communities, giving freely of ourselves to our children, our friends and our fellow citizens, as the veterans of this state have served and given so freely themselves.

May God bless this hallowed ground, just as He has blessed the veterans who will be laid to rest in this sacred place. God bless you.